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Authority **NND 969000**  
By **CB** Date **04/09/02**



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DEF 12-5 IRAN  
XR DEF 19-8 US-IRAN

**TELEGRAM**

~~SECRET~~ 716

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19-L  
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 PM-06 NSC-10 SS-14 RSC-01 SA-03 CIAE-00 INR-06

NSAE-00 MC-02 EUR-20 **RSR-01** L-03 E-11 AID-20 IGA-02

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R 250930Z FEB 72  
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7861  
INFO SECDEF  
EUCOM  
CSAF

~~SECRET~~ TEHRAN 1164

SUBJECT: ACCELERATION OF F-4ES FOR IRAN

*By 12-5 Iran Def 19-8 US Iran*

REF: TEHRAN 1091; TEHRAN 263; MOSCOW 1603

COUNTRY TEAM MESSAGE

BEGIN SUMMARY

GENERAL AZIMI, MINISTER OF WAR, ON INSTRUCTION OF SHAH ASKS THAT WE TAKE ANOTHER HARD LOOK AT F-4E PRODUCTION LINE IN ORDER ACCELERATE DELIVERY OF ONE SQUADRON OF F-4ES TO IRAN IN 1972. REQUEST REFLECTS SHAH'S INCREASING CONCERN OVER SOVIET AMBITIONS IN AREA AND ESPECIALLY THREAT SHAH SEES TO IRAN OF FRIENDSHIP TREATY UNDER CONSIDERATION BY IRAQ AND USSR. SHAH RECOGNIZES PROBLEMS THIS POSES FOR US BUT IS TURNING TO USG WITH THIS REQUEST TO GIVE IRAN HIGHER PRIORITY ON F-4E PRODUCTION SCHEDULE BECAUSE HE REGARDS US AS MOST DEPENDABLE FRIEND. END SUMMARY

ACTION REQUESTED: COUNTRY TEAM RECOMMENDS US REVIEW F-4E PRODUCTION LINE AND RESPOND FAVORABLY TO SHAH'S REQUEST FOR 16 F-4ES IN 1972 FROM WHATEVER SOURCE MAY BE AVAILABLE.

1. ON FEB 24 CHARGE WAS CONVOKED BY MINISTER OF WAR, GEN. REZANUZIMI, ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM SHAH. AZIMI SAID SHAH MOST

*Tehran 1164  
2/25/72*

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DEEPLY CONCERNED AT TRENDS IN SECURITY SITUATION IN MIDDLE EAST, AND ESPECIALLY ON HIS WESTERN BORDERS. US OFFICIALS ALREADY AWARE OF SHAH'S CONCERN THROUGH DISCUSSIONS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER AND OTHER GOI OFFICIALS (SEE REFTELS), BUT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN IRAQ SOVIET RELATIONS INCLUDING AGREEMENT TO DELIVER MORE MIGS AND OTHER MILITARY EQUIPMENT PLUS INDICATION THAT RECENT IRAQI-SOVIET TALKS IN MOSCOW INCLUDED CONSIDERATION OF FRIENDSHIP TREATY AS WELL AS INCREASED MILITARY COOPERATION INJECT NEW SENSE OF URGENCY IN SHAH'S TIMETABLE FOR MODERNIZING AND STRENGTHENING HIS ARMED FORCES. MOST SPECIFICALLY, SITUATION REQUIRED IRAN ACCELERATE ITS MILITARY PROCUREMENT AND MOST PARTICULARLY DELIVERY OF F-4E AIRCRAFT.

2. AZIMI RECALLED THAT GOI HAD REQUESTED DELIVERY OF 16 OF F-4E AIRCRAFT NOW ON ORDER BY IRAN (FIRST OF WHICH WAS NOT SCHEDULED FOR DELIVERY UNTIL AUGUST 1973) BE ADVANCED TO CY 1972. HOWEVER, GOI HAD RECENTLY BEEN INFORMED BY USG AND MCDONNELL-DOUGLAS THAT PRODUCTION LINE FOR IRAN COULD NOT BE ADVANCED TO MEET 1972 DELIVERY DATES DESIRED. SHAH WAS MOST DISTURBED, AS ADDITION OF F-4ES IN 1972 WAS VITAL TO IRAN'S SECURITY AT THIS TIME. SHAH HAD DIRECTED THAT USG BE ASKED, IF PRODUCTION FOR IRAN COULD NOT IN FACT BE ADVANCED, TO MAKE REQUESTED F-4ES AVAILABLE FROM OTHER SOURCES. SHAH'S DESIRE IS FOR DELIVERY OF F-4ES IN LOTS OF FOUR DURING JUNE TO DECEMBER TIME-FRAME.

3. CHARGE REVIEWED RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN US-IRAN MILITARY COOPERATION, INCLUDING EQUIPMENT AND CREDIT, AND STRESSED THAT RECORD INDICATED HE UNDERSTOOD AND APPRECIATED SHAH'S CONCERNS AND DESIRES AND HAD BEEN EXCEPTIONALLY RESPONSIVE TO SHAH'S WISHES. CURRENTLY, AZIMI'S DEPUTY GEN. TOUFANS, WAS IN US

DISCUSSING VERY QUESTION OF ACCELERATED EQUIPMENT ACQUISITION

INCLUDING F-4E.

ACCELERATION OF F-4E DELIVERY RAISED DIFFICULT TECHNICAL AND COST PROBLEMS AS WELL AS QUESTIONS OF OTHER COMMITMENTS AND PRIORITIES. UNDOUBTEDLY THESE ISSUES WERE BEING DISCUSSED IN FULL WITH GEN. TOUFANIAN TO ENSURE THAT HE WAS COMPLETELY INFORMED OF POSSIBILITIES AND PROBLEMS AND REASONS FOR ANY LIMITATIONS ON MEETING GOI REQUEST THAT MIGHT EXIST. GEN.

TOUFANIAN PROBABLY WOULD HAVE FULLER PICTURE OF SITUATION THAN

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WE NOW HAD IN IRAN.

4. AZIMI RESPONDED THAT GOI WAS BEING KEPT INFORMED OF TOUFAN-  
IAN DISCUSSIONS, BUT DECISION ON F-4E COULD NOT BE DELAYED.  
AZIMI MADE CLEAR SHAH FELT ACQUISITION OF 16 F-4E AIRCRAFT IN  
1972 WAS MOST IMPORTANT IMMEDIATE MILITARY PROBLEM OUTSTANDING.  
HE STRESSED SHAH BELIEVED THAT NUMBER REQUIRED WAS SMALL IN  
RELATION TO US INVENTORY, AND THAT UNSETTLED SITUATION CONFRONT-  
ING IRAN WARRANTED ACCELERATED DELIVERY TO IRAN AS AGAINST OTHER  
POSSIBLE DISPOSITIONS (AS TO EUROPE OR EVEN USAF) IN SAME TIME  
FRAME.

5. CHARGE NOTED WE WOULD TRANSMIT SHAH'S REQUEST TO WASHING-  
TON AND THAT USG, IN SPIRIT OF CLOSE FRIENDSHIP WHICH MARKED  
OUR RELATIONS WOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO BE RESPONSIVE.  
CHARGE SAID THIS SAME FRIENDSHIP REQUIRED HIM TO SAY, HOWEVER,  
THAT ALTHOUGH WE WOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO MEET SHAH'S  
NEEDS AS SHAH SAW THEM, OUR MILITARY ADVISERS, AS GOI  
KNEW, WERE CONCERNED THAT ACCELERATION OF AIRCRAFT ACQUISITION  
WOULD STRAIN SUPPORT AND OPERATIONAL MANPOWER OF IIAF AND COULD  
LEAD TO DECREASE RATHER THAN INCREASE IN IIAF EFFECTIVENESS.  
AZIMI REPLIED THAT NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT TO BE DELIVERED HAD BEEN  
CLOSELY STUDIED BY IIAF WITH MAAG ASSISTANCE, AND IIAF WAS SATIS-  
FIED THAT SIXTEEN AIRCRAFT REQUESTED COULD BE EFFECTIVELY INTE-  
GRATED INTO PRESENT FORCE STRUCTURE. AZIMI CLOSED MEETING BY  
ASKING THAT USG ANSWER SHAH'S REQUEST AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE.

6. COMMENT. SHAH IS DEEPLY CONCERNED AT DEVELOPMENTS OVER PAST  
YEARS STRENGTHENING SOVIET INFLUENCE AND PRESENCE IN MIDEAST AND  
INDIAN OCEAN AND APPEARING TO INDICATE SUBSTANTIALLY ENLARGED  
SOVIET COMMITMENT, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY, TO IRAQ. HE HAS CON-  
CLUDED THAT INCREASED PRESENT DANGER REQUIRES IRAN'S FIRST LINE  
AIR DEFENSE TO BE BEEFED-UP NOW RATHER THAN IN PREVIOUSLY PRO-  
GRAMMED SCHEDULE STARTING IN EIGHTEEN MONTHS. THE NUMBER,  
FREQUENCY AND TONE OF DEMARCHES ON SUBJECT WE HAVE RECEIVED  
IS VIRTUALLY UNPARALLELED, AND CAN LEAVE NO DOUBT THAT HIM  
CONSIDERS ISSUE OF VITAL IMPORTANCE.

7. WHETHER WE FULLY AGREE WITH SHAH'S CONCERN, WE MUST TAKE INTO  
ACCOUNT THAT REQUEST -- LIKE USG DECISION IN 1970 ON SALE TO  
IRAN OF SEVENTH AND EIGHTH SQUADRONS OF F-4E -- HAS BECOME  
ANOTHER GUT ISSUE IN SHAH'S MIND. SHAH IS AGAIN TURNING TO

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USG BECAUSE IN PERIOD OF ANXIETY SHAH FEELS HE CAN LOOK TO US FOR COOPERATION AND HE HOPES THAT US AS RELIABLE FRIEND WILL FIND CHANCE

BE RESPONSIVE ON MATTER HE CONSIDERS IMPORTANT AND VITAL TO IRAN'S SECURITY. THUS USG CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST MUST RECOGNIZE THAT DECISION INVOLVES UNUSUAL DEGREE OF POLITICAL IMPORTANCE RELATED TO FABRIC OF USG-GOI RELATIONS. DECISION SHOULD ALSO NOT OVERLOOK OR UNDERESTIMATE IMPORTANCE OF IRAN FOR VITAL US NATIONAL INTERESTS.

8. ACTION REQUESTED. COUNTRY TEAM URGES THAT USG GIVE PROMPT AND SYMPATHETIC ATTENTION TO SHAH'S REQUEST FOR 1972 DELIVERY OF F-4E AIRCRAFT, FROM WHATEVER SOURCES MAY BE AVAILABLE TO BE TAPPED (INCLUDING DELIVERIES TO USAF). WE RECOGNIZE THAT REQUEST MAY RAISE DIFFICULT PROBLEMS, BUT URGE THAT EVERY AVENUE BE EXPLORED TO REACH POSITIVE RESPONSE. IT IS ALSO MOST IMPORTANT THAT COUNTRY TEAM BE KEPT FULLY INFORMED OF PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS TO ENABLE US CONTINUE TO MEET AND TEMPER SENSE OF URGENCY ON SUBJECT WHICH PREVAILS WITHIN GOI. IF DELAYS OR BARRIERS TO FULLY FAVORABLE RESPONSE MATERIALIZE, WE TRUST THAT EVERY EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE (E.G. PARTIAL DELIVERY IN 1972) AND THAT PERSUASIVE RATIONALE CAN BE DEVELOPED TO FULLY EXPLAIN TO SHAH REASONS FOR ANY SHORTCOMING, IN ORDER TO DIMINISH AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE NEGATIVE IMPACT. GP-3 HECK

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